

These obstructionist tactics are shameful, unfair, and have become all too common. At a time when the American people have important issues backlogged in the courts, partisan Senators are playing politics with the judicial process at the expense of timely justice for the American people.

I commend Senate Republicans, especially Leader Frist, Chairman Hatch, and Senator Santorum, for their leadership and commitment to the Constitution and basic fairness. During their 40-hour debate, these

Senators have focused on the damaging vacancies that exist on the Federal courts of appeals, the highly qualified individuals I have nominated to serve, and the Senate's obligation to vote on every judicial nominee.

No matter who is President or which party controls the Senate, the American people deserve a well-functioning, independent judiciary and a commitment by all Senators to live up to their constitutional obligation.

Statement on Congressional Action on Comprehensive Energy Legislation *November 14, 2003*

I applaud the House and Senate for reaching agreement on a comprehensive energy bill. America will be safer and stronger with a national energy policy that will help keep the lights on, the furnaces lit, and the factories running. A good energy bill is part of my six-point economic

plan to create the conditions for job creation and a sustained recovery. By making America less reliant on foreign sources of energy, we also will make our Nation more secure. I commend the Congress for its hard work on this important issue.

Memorandum on Return of Activated Military Members to Federal Civilian Employment *November 14, 2003*

Memorandum for the Heads of Executive Departments and Agencies

Subject: Return of Activated Military Members to Federal Civilian Employment

As we welcome home returning Federal civil servants who were called to active duty in the continuing Global War on Terrorism, we recognize the contributions they have made in the defense of freedom. Whether they served with the Reserve Forces or the Air and Army National Guard, each of them has my personal gratitude and the respect and admiration of a grateful Nation.

The Federal Government will continue to be the model for employer support to

the Guard and Reserve. We are the guarantors of the rights of returning service members under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, and I am personally committed to providing each of them with our full support, recognition, and assistance. Accordingly, I hereby direct you to grant Federal employees under your authority who are returning from active duty 5 days of uncharged leave from their civilian duties, consistent with the provisions of Federal law.

We also are grateful for the extra efforts of the many Federal civilian employees